

19 July 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting with the President on Berlin Planning, 1000 hours,  
19 July 1962

1. At 1000 hours, July 19, 1962, the President met with representatives of State-Defense-JCS-the White House staff, in order to consider approval of a US position on HERCON/MARCON contingency planning concerning Berlin, specifically BQD-M-27 dated 12 July 1962 and its enclosure. What follows is the result of an informal debriefing by General Taylor. Among others who attended were Secretaries Rusk and McNamara, Assistant Secretaries Kohler and Nitze, Generals Lemnitz and Gray, and Messrs. Bundy and Klein.

2. The discussion did not proceed in a particularly orderly manner and it was only with some difficulty that Mr. Nitze was eventually able to direct the attention of the meeting to its constituted purpose of discussing and approving the [ ] planning positions embodied in [ ]. He was eventually, however, able to do this and the President has given his approval to the paper.

4. After the above early discussion, Mr. Nitze proceeded to outline briefly and generally the place of the [ ] in over-all Berlin

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planning. General Lemnitzer then followed, as planned, with a useful explanation of the specific BERCOMs and MARCOMs proposed for approval, but the President kept intervening with questions. In answer to one of them, General Gray said that on his recent trip to Europe he had discovered that BERCON planning activity had not yet even descended to the level of Armistice, and that therefore some months would undoubtedly be required before fully prepared operational plans would be available up and down the entire line.

5. At one point in the discussion the briefers mentioned that the Allies, including the United States, would enter into some mobilization activity. The President thereupon asked what the US plan was for mobilizing whom on what time schedule, but no ready answer was forthcoming from the group.

6. Comment. It would seem that the President never clearly understood the exact place occupied by the [ ] plans in the over-all picture of Berlin contingency planning. [ ]

The one basic Berlin planning "Bible" with which the President is, or at least was at one time, reasonably familiar is the so-called [ ] of use, how, where and when the [ ] file into it, would almost surely have led to greater understanding by the President and therefore a more orderly consideration of the paper which formed the subject of the meeting.

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